

# SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH

DEVOTED TO THE ILLUSTRATION OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

PARTRIDGE AND BRITTAN, PUBLISHERS AND PROPRIETORS, NO. 300 BROADWAY—TERMS, TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE; SINGLE COPIES, FIVE CENTS.

VOL. III.—NO. 42.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1855.

WHOLE NO. 146.

## The Principles of Nature.

### MUSIC A LANGUAGE.

BY E. A. G. REMINGTON.

—All they  
Whose intellect is an overmastering power,  
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay,  
Or lightens it to spirit, whatso'er  
The form which their creations may essay,  
Are bards.

Was Music given by the Creator to amuse, delight, or improve us? Were we formed for happiness or duty? Is pleasure a good? These and other similar questions which were accustomed to engage the schoolmen, finally giving rise to the two rival sects, the Epicureans and Stoics, have not yet ceased to be asked by the thoughtful mind. The most rational conclusion seems to be, that to obtain the highest pleasure which we are capable of enjoying, no duty must be neglected, since each has its correspondent pleasure. The reward of labor is the agreeableness of rest—of obedience, satisfaction—of industry and economy, wealth—of perseverance, accomplishment.

Do the birds, in opening Spring, sing to delight us? The flowers bloom to perfume the air we breathe? Does it matter not, whether we listen to the one or gaze on the other as innocent and dutiful, or as vexed and guilty? The things are the same, but not to us.

God has everywhere strewn riches with a bountiful hand. The universe so adorned, so shining, was it to delight His energies—to display beauty—to diffuse happiness—He created it? Was it all for the human soul—here seeing darkly, enjoying in a limited manner—yet soaring, aspiring? Is the bluebird's first note from the throat of Spring, to awaken us to a livelier sense of remembered pleasures, or only expressive of its own innocent contentment? Was the "Iris all hues" reflected in the peacock's shining train to display the lavish power of divinely creative energies, to delight its bearer with its gaudy coloring, or form another link in the all-embracing chain of beauty—or is there need to determine that any one thing must have been formed for a sole specific purpose, rather than for purposes innumerable? Are not all formed to accomplish and crown the creation—the flowers—the stars—the orange and scarlet colored birds and glittering insects?

Echo, where wast thou born—in caverns, amid myrtles and cypress? Echoes of sweet sounds like those of things unattainable, which play about the chambers of the brain, sprang they the one from the speech of Deity, the other from his thoughts. To how many has he given to echo his being? To all, some phase of it. As the leafless almond tree in winter unfolds the germs of its summer beauty—so all men inwrap seeds of a fair humanity. All are his chosen—the few his early-blown. Are we all types of him, or while he has attributes which do not at all pertain to us, have we not faith which is not of, but from Him? Still, when we look for some attribute in Him which has no shade of existence in ourselves, are we not baffled, since we have no clue by which to determine it?

Our most gifted men are in no way types of the Divine—but of humanity. We have all one common brotherhood—adore one common Source of the origin of all—to that brotherhood we cling—that Source we reverence. If to none He has given to echo His being—leaving this to be revealed from all time—to whom has He given to become archetypes of our human? Is it alone the poet, whose reverent faith encircles the unknown, and gives utterance as sweetly as he may to that embrace, as if that nearness were uttered forth in a birth of sweet accord—it is alone the poet, whose tenderness of love is not valued, yet of a fatal necessity still given—is it he alone who possesses that compass of soul and imagination that men wonder at? Wherein differ the artist and composer?

The poet and the artist express their conceptions—the composer suggests his—the wild and weird notes of the musician stir the soul with indelible emotions. And herein are all high arts similar—their creations having once been experienced, haunt us ever after. The poet expresses his thoughts in language—gives flow to his feelings in verse. The artist embodies his conceptions on canvas and in marble. The one meets with no limit to his capabilities of expression, save that in which his language is imbedded. The other none save that which matter offers to the suggestions of mind. Music has neither of these mediums nor restrictions. Yet while it has no verbal language, it has a language peculiarly its own.

It ranges the wide domain of nature for its mother tongue. The bird, the brook and cataract, the zephyr and the storm, the acacia and the pine, the interminable forest and the boundless ocean, are its tributaries. From these it borrows the sweet or wild strains in which it is to utter human passions and human thoughts. The serene state of mind, the absolute repose to which it introduces us, proves beyond question its claim to be ranked as an art, and displays a power of utterance beyond words, if not beyond the capabilities of the forms which matter may be made to assume. Its expression is fleeting and transient; not so its effect. A lively air may sweep across the

spirit as lightly as a wanton zephyr across the scarce ruffled lake, but when it enshrines the genius of its power, it speaks as commandingly as though scattered trails of humanity were collected in one blast of concentrated utterance. Its sweet tumults revive a life of joy; its solemn cadenza is the mourning of the human soul.

The emotions have no language more genuine. Hence the universality of Music—its popularity with the uneducated masses; and here too is proof, if any were needed, that the savage and the beggar have feelings in common with the cultivated and religious. Rude as their minds may be, they have joys and sorrows not unlike those of the fortunate.

Music is capable of expressing every feeling of joy, from the most superficial and evanescent to the highest and serene, and perhaps is susceptible of rendering no other emotion so adequately. Remove the banquet scene from the stage while the Brindisi in "Luceria Borgia" is being performed, and still the auditors would be enchanted with the unmistakable import of the music; or the cups and the dice from the scene in which they are introduced in "Robert le Diable," and the auditors would still be borne along on the impetuous tide of wild revelry. Nor less potent is its language in representing the purer delights of the mind. The harmonies of the sacred composers have lifted many a spirit into their own atmosphere of devotion, wherein the spirit forgets the trammels which clog it on the earth, the perplexed doubts and unsubmitiveness which often weigh upon it, to yield itself momentarily to the superior genius of the composer, and live in a purer air, to press back all doubts, repress all regret in one yielding breath of homage. Such moments hallow Music to the soul, and rank Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Beethoven by the side of the great spirits of Dante and Homer, Milton and Angelo, Shakespeare and Raphael.

Great spirits do not differ so much in the wealth of the burden which they bear as in their modes of expression. And indeed all men differ less in heart and mind, in soul and spirit, than in development and powers of expression. The poet is born to his language—he delights in it from infancy—he is imbued with its spirit and molded with its mold before he begins to utter his fancies and sentiments, his thoughts and imagination; by it, while the artist and the composer have not only almost to shape for themselves a method of expression, but have to struggle against the difficulties which arise from having all their lives been forced to express themselves in a manner to which their natures render them unfitted. But fortunately nature is on their side in this, that the representative by signs and sounds in the history of man's development precedes that by words—while on the other hand, the poet has the advantage of the increased facilities in our natures. The secret of the power of music does not lie amid the terrors of the "Inferno," but in the harmonies of the supernal, unrevealed by the pen of poet or pencil of artist.

From morn  
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
A summer's day; and with the setting sun,  
Dropped from the zenith like a falling star  
On Lemnos, the "Ægean isle"—

may be instanced at random as a specimen of verbal description, wherein language excels art.

Again, in Hamlet to the Ghost—

"What may this mean?  
That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel  
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon  
Making night hideous: and we fools of nature  
So horribly do shake our disposition  
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls"—

is shown what power of suggestion a few words that burn may have, when confined to the things which we feel.

Poetry has greatest potency to turn us within ourselves—music and art to lift us above ourselves. The former sustains us longer, the latter are more powerful for the time. The former ranges the universe for its suggestions, addresses every faculty of our being, involves within its range the element of moral and mental philosophy, and is an apt vehicle for lofty truths.

And if this seem to yield to the poet too great power, to the exclusion of any place for art, the Apollo of the heathen might have been forgotten, save that we have the immortal creation of the Sun-God, whose noble lineaments cease not to-day to stamp deathless impressions of ideal perfection on its beholder.

The first great soul in the order of enlightenment is the poet, who, whether receiving his inspiration direct from the Creator, or in later times borrowing from the traditional past, expresses the outward by glowing description, the inward by recognized portrayals. In his soul, the universe of mind and matter moves to harmonious accords. His thoughts are as a double mirror, which reflects, the one the thoughts of the Divinity, the other the perversions of man. And the perversions are doubly revolting from their nearness in his soul to the indelible impress of beauty. The poet is universal; the artist and composer, intense. Michael Angelo seems now to men to have lived on the earth as one who tramples on the flowers' un-mindful of them, while he holds perpetual converse with the clouds and stars. Shakespeare was never so intensely elated,

but ever more broad. The Ægean, nestled amid its sweet borders, lashed to fury by storms, and the broad Atlantic, basking placidly in the sunlight, are not more unlike. If the one terrify, the other is more calmly imposing. Even the intense Paganini and Salvador Rosa may be more truthfully likened the one to the other than to any of the great poets. In the whole range of the poets, perhaps no one will be found who has more of the intense, which generally characterizes composers, than Dante. You can scarcely follow him through his ghostly regions, or soar after him, buoyed up as he seems to be by the invisible pinions of the passionately adored Beatrice, without feeling that it is song indeed that befits such purity of passion.

It is true, all are possessed of more or less intensity. Fer- vor is the characteristic of genius, but never one-sidedness. It may display only one phase, but it can not be thoroughly wanting in any. It is an attribute too high for this. Ostade lived to enoble lowliness in domestic life; Guido to raise sweetness and humility in women to the divine; Turner to bring to the fireside those stirring recollections and conceptions of grandeur which encircle his sea pieces; Angelo and Raphael drew their inspiration from the Bible; Airy Scheffer now draws his from the same sublime source whence Milton drew his; Wordsworth communed with nature as though his delicately fashioned ear heard more than mortal tones breathing through its forms. All beautiful conceptions of Poesy, all fair outward existences, all revealed creations, are brought to our firesides through the echoes of Art. All sounds in nature, or sweet or wild, are echoed by Music.

The arts are so imbued with philosophy, so calculated to impart it, as to be fit exponents of the accomplishment of an individual's or nation's manhood. All that is universal in thought or beautiful in character flows into our minds through the attractive channels of Verse. All that is gorgeous in coloring, delightful in grouping, severe in conception, woe's our vision in Art; while all sweet sounds in nature, all majesties, from the utterance of the startled eagle, from the cry of human anguish and despair, from the spontaneous burst which gushes from the lip of joy, from the forest and ocean soundings to the harmonies of the starry host, are the delightful echoes of Music.

Poetry has no embodiment, but as an airy phantom, addresses the serene soul with noble thoughts and sentiments. Art moves the mind through the eye by its present glorified being; while Music, with its notes of "linked sweetness," takes through the ear the "prisoned soul," carries it captive, willingly yielding itself to the enjoyment of sympathetic pleasures, wonder, surprise, terror, and delight. The ideas of something above us which haunt our whole existence, move in bright gleams on its loftiest wave, to which we aspire, on which we would float, as buoyed upward toward the infinite by a power which we seek not to comprehend, content in our abandonment to the elysium it imparts.

In judging of the capabilities of expression in Music, it is necessary to consider not only the variety of notes which compose its language, but its variety of sounds, as consisting of soft, wild, or harsh tones, compass and volume, complex or simple harmonies. The most indifferently voice, in attempting a particular sentiment, may create feelings most diverse to those which are occasioned by the most musical. Different also are the emotions which arise from hearing the same tune performed by a flute or a chime of bells, an efficient or an inefficient orchestra, an organ or a violin. True, not all times are equally adapted to every instrument, but in judging of the full power of Music, these as well as variety of notes, arrangement and grouping, simplicity or want of clearness, complexity and unity, must be considered.

If musicians and artists have often a less broad development than men of letters, it may be owing to the requirements of their arts more than to any native incapacity on their part, or undue enthusiasm for one class of thoughts. Nor must indifference be taken for incapacity, which has become a fault so common as to have begotten a fear in many of having the variety of their abilities known, lest it should too much prejudice their reputation for skill in those things in which they especially excel.

Cicero's language to the young orator may be not inaptly applied to musicians and artists. Whatever widens their experience in any mental or emotional direction, or gives increased knowledge in any branch of learning, increases their power; we do not master one subject best by frequently going through its routine, but by grappling with the most difficult we become able to perform the more simple with grace and readiness. The world of thought must pay tribute to every master mind; some particular beat calls it as by the voice of divinity to its adopted mission. Often is that voice sadly heard calling by some seemingly terrible dispensation. As the flower yields its full wealth of fragrance when crushed to earth, the wind-harp its most heavenly tone on being swept to breaking by rude blasts, so genius, under almost insupportable burdens in bowing or opposing, yields beauties before unheard of, save in words of revealing, and splendors unseen save in heavenly visions.

But even this does not free it from censure. The veil that

envelops it is rudely thrust aside, and as the vulgar gaze discerns little save the common attributes of humanity, it condemns its weakness, in ignorance of its almost superhuman strength and grandeur. Is he, after all, nothing but a man? What should he be more? Is the significant query, since to accomplish one's manhood is to fulfill our earthly destiny.

A sacred relic of a higher nature lingers in every human soul that experiences a veneration for genius—he be artist, poet, philosopher, musician; deal he in the complex and many windings of abstruse science; fathom he the depths of the knowable in the laws of matter; soar he to the serene bounds that limit the pure ray of mind, or be he moved with the troubled tossings of upheaving emotions.

Whether painting be more broad in its expression than music, the latter possesses advantages not shared to its fullest extent by poetry—directness of address, which amounts to such fullness of appliance as to take captive not alone the eye as in sculpture, nor the mind as in poetry, but our whole being, sense, soul, mind, eye, thought, and comprehension.

In this respect it is so delicately adapted to the condition of our being, that it becomes a most interesting question, to what noble purposes it may be applied. The Romish Church was true to the requirements of our nature when it employed music and the arts to uplift the imagination and the senses. Man was false when he idolized the means instead of the end of his elevation.

The souls of the musician and poet are not only not diversely constituted, but their plan and method of expression are similar. The perfect musical composition requires as much consistency as the lyric poem. If *disjuncta membra* has been the fashion in either, it is nevertheless inadmissible. As the lyric in its changes of movement should glide so gracefully as not to mar the unity, so should the canzonet; and the symphony loses all the effect of its grandeur when it fails to observe this great principle. As the lyric poet should be not only consistent in his arrangement and grouping, but have a delicate sense of rhythm, or measure, or music, so should the composer have not only an ear for sweet sounds, but judgment in the conduct of their movements, never changing the last so much as to destroy the unity of the sentiment. For the musician or poet to be guilty of such inconsistency, is as palpable a fault as for an artist to represent a dancing satyr and a flowery lawn on the same canvas with our crucified Lord.

Again, as the lyric poet must be governed in his choice of measure by his thought or sentiment; or, rather, as the latter must be allowed to flow in their native channel, the heroic in iambs and spondee, the lively in amphibrachs and trochees, the light narrative in mixed measures, which forms the English hexameter, so should the composer's thoughts be woven in and out along the chosen key, never losing sight of the prime sentiment to be expressed, except in very long compositions, in the way of episode or graceful variation. The question, whether particular styles of music are native with certain nations, is similar to the one which at present is vexing some of our most cultivated American scholars, whether the hexameter is natural in English verse. Wherein there lies two difficulties—first, in determining what the English hexameter is, it differing so much from the classic as to make it an invention rather than an imitation; and second, how far our thoughts are wont to flow in accustomed channels. All arts are born of the mind of a people, and not the clime, any farther than the latter influences the former. Let the American mind be accustomed to nothing but French floritures, and its musical compositions would partake of that type. Two things are necessary in order to high attainments, the ability and the occasion. In capricious and fantastic composition, in largeness, breadth and richness, the musical has a great advantage, as also in the representative. The rhythm of particular lines in poetry has a resemblance to certain sounds in nature, and great depth and beauty of feeling give musical richness to the verse, but poetry is not an art representative by sounds. Whenever it ascends to this felicity, it exhibits an exception rather than a rule. Music has been employed to represent simply, by its recurrence of sounds, every variety of dance, from that of the negro and faun, to the airy movements of spirits. A chime of bells has been known to suggest the ethereal movements of beatified spirits. That harmony which delights us in sculptured groups, in arrangement of coloring everywhere in nature, from the delicate apple-bud amid its wealth of light green, to the daisied lawn—

"God's beauty fills the daisied slope"—

from the blue and gray of the sky to the monotonous of the sounding sea, in the graceful shape of the human form and pencilled loveliness of living outline in the human face divine, is preëminently the characteristic and soul of music. The yearnings of the spirit for good, for beauty, for truth and holiness, so deep, so silent, so speechless, are made to leap unconsciously at its ethereal breath. In its serene shrine the pictured loveliness, the imaged "je ne sais quoi" is named harmony. There is no speech in these silent depths save through her voice.

Though at first we hesitated at ranking Music among the arts rather than the sciences, it will now be apparent that they

all require great knowledge and judgment, and are all equally arts. The great works of the composer are no less creations than Moore's, or Burns', or Schiller's, or Byron's, and have a universal language. Eve's Lament would fall inane on the ears of the myriads who speak a different tongue, while the same sentiments conveyed by Music would enchain alike Gentile and Jew, Barbarian and Greek. The grand symphony is the lyric in four or more parts, the opera, histrionic music, the melodies, simple lyrics. The oratorio is a grand and sublime anthem. Music is capable of rendering each part here assigned it, without the aid of adventitious words. Music is a gift of speech, is to develop and enlarge our culture, elevate our desires, ennoble our aspirations, delight by its sweetness and largeness, bind all kindreds in one common bond of amity. The high, the low, the beggar and king, are addressed by it as one. Vice becomes innocence in attempting to express itself in its harmonious channels. Wild and fitful as the wailing winds, it is soul-full still, and whatever it approaches it turns to its own likeness. Fathom all its hidden depths and capabilities here we can not. The limitless expression of the powers of the human soul may not be sounded until that soul becomes developed in the infinite cycles through which it is destined to blossom and expand.

### INDIAN PROPHETS.

MY DEAR BRITTAN:

In the following extract from John Forbes' "Oriental Memoirs" (London, 1818), our friend Dr. Young may find something to sharpen up a little his obtuseness of perception in regard to that *infelix* problem, which appears from the public record to distress and perplex our erudite brother not a little. "Nil desperandum" should be the Doctor's motto, for I have no doubt but that with perseverance, study, and perhaps a little sweet oil, he will in time be able to look as far into, and comprehend as fully that incomprehensible conglomerate of German mysticism and Yankee transcendentalism with which some of the rest of us delight to befog ourselves and astonish the natives, as the most learned Theban among us. Truly yours, JAMES E. WORTH.

Forbes says: "Ghost-seers and astrologers are innumerable in India, and millions believe in their supernatural powers; many wander about like gipsies, but only a few Brahmins use the prophetic power with a certain dignity and modesty. I will give a short account of one of these Brahmins as an example."

To understand the following narrative, we must here remark that at Forbes' arrival in Bombay, in 1766, there were three parties; at the head of one stood Spencer, at the other Cromerlin; the third was under the leadership of Mr. Hodges, who, it was said, had been deprived of the governorship in an unjust and improper manner. Hodges had on this account written a violent letter to the Governor and the council of the Company; and was, as he refused to retract what he had written, removed from his governorship of Surat, recalled to Bombay, and dismissed from the Company's service. The Government of Bombay had sent a report of these proceedings to England.

Forbes continues as follows: "This Brahmin was a young man when Hodges made his acquaintance. He was but little known to the English, but was much celebrated among the Hindoos, at least on the west coast of India. I believe that Hodges had become acquainted with him when he was an English resident in Bombay. Both became as intimate friends as the difference in religion and caste would allow. The Brahmin, an upright man, often admonished his friend never to depart from the path of virtue; which would lead him to success and honor, and to eternal happiness. To impress this exhortation upon his mind, he assured him that he would rise from the situation he filled in Bombay to higher posts in the Company's service, after that he would be collector of Telli-cherry and Surat, and, last, governor of Bombay. Mr. Hodges often mentioned these prophecies to his friends, but himself paid little attention to them. It was only when he gradually rose to these posts of honor that he placed more confidence in the Brahmin, particularly when he was named collector of Surat. When, however, in course of time, Spencer was named governor, and Hodges was dismissed from the service of the Company, he sent to the prophet, who at the time was living at Bulpara, a sacred village on the banks of the Tappi. He went to Hodges, and listened to the disagreeable end of his hopes and endeavors. Hodges finished by saying that he would sail for Europe, and therefore did not expect the brilliant fulfillment of the Brahmin's promises. It is even said that he let fall some reproaches during the conversation, on account of these deceitful prophecies. The Brahmin listened to all with the greatest composure, did not move a muscle, and said: 'You see this ante-chamber, and that room to which it leads; Mr. Spencer has reached the portico, but will not enter the palace—he has placed his foot on the threshold, but he will not enter the house. Notwithstanding every appearance to the contrary, you will reach the honors and fill the elevated post I have foretold, and to which he has been appointed. A black cloud hangs before him.'

"This surprising prophecy was soon known in Surat and Bombay; it was the topic of conversation in every society. Hodges had, however, so little confidence in it, that he prepared to commence his voyage home. In the mean time, how-







## FACTS AND REMARKS.

**DREAMS VERIFIED.**—In our issue of last week (Feb. 10th.), we noticed a couple of facts in the experience of a prophetic dreamer, a lady of our acquaintance in Williamsburg. One of these related to her finding her mother at a certain store, and the other to her finding her sister at a lawyer's office, by indications in her dreams, when neither of them had been expected at the place indicated, at that particular time. We will now mention two similar cases in the same lady's experience: She dreamed, some time since, that she saw a certain person of her acquaintance dressed in an unusual manner, in black clothing, and looking extremely and doleful. She saw the gentleman afterward, and related to him her dream, playfully adding that she hoped he was not going to get so angry at her as to cause him to wear such a countenance as he wore then. The next time she saw him he was clothed precisely as she saw him in her dream, and was sitting in the same forlorn and doleful attitude, and with precisely the same expression of countenance, and reproducing every minute particular of the picture she had seen in her nocturnal vision, he being in deep affliction on account of the sudden death of his wife by apoplexy!

Quite recently the same lady, one Saturday night, received an impression in her dream that her brother, who resided in Virginia, would visit her family the next day. The next morning she accordingly told her husband that her brother would be there during the day; but this the husband thought extremely improbable, and heartily laughed at the prediction when informed that it rested only upon a dream. In a few hours, however, the brother actually came in, just as she had seen him in her dream.

**CURIOUS CASE OF "PSYCHOMETRIC" DREAMING.**—We were informed of the following by our friend Dr. F., of Brooklyn, who received the facts from an authentic source: Several years ago, during a severe winter, the Schuylkill River at Philadelphia became thickly bridged over with ice, and thousands of persons resorted thither for the exercise of skating, sliding, etc. Some persons, in order to make an honest penny by the amusement of the throng, had sunk a post through the ice and attached a horizontal revolving shaft to a pivot on its upper end. To the end of this shaft a sled was attached by a rope, which, by pushing the shaft, might be made to revolve rapidly in a circle upon the ice, with persons upon it. Among the persons who got upon the sled was a negro, and the persons in charge of the shaft caused it to revolve so rapidly that the negro was thrown outward by the centrifugal force, and striking violently against a projecting piece of ice, he was instantly killed. This occurrence was witnessed by a physician, a friend of my informant, who happened to be present. On the evening of that same day, this physician had occasion to prepare a dose of pills to send to one of his patients, a lady extremely susceptible to magnetic influences. As he was mixing the ingredients of the pills, and rolling them in his fingers to their proper shape, he related to the persons in his office the particulars of the fatal occurrence he had witnessed on the river during the day. The pills were afterward dispatched by a messenger to the lady for whom they were intended. The next day the physician saw one of the lady's family, and inquired concerning her health. It was ascertained that she was doing tolerably well, but that she had had a singular and vivid dream the night previous. She dreamed that she was somewhere on the ice where there were a great many persons skating and sliding, and that she had there seen a negro thrown from a revolving sled against a piece of ice, and instantly killed! As the lady had not heard of the accident on the river, her dream was evidently the result of the doctor's mind magnetically impressed upon the pills. The case presents a suggestion not only important in a philosophical point of view, but which, in particular cases, may be made eminently practical.

**CURIOUS EXAMPLE OF A NATURAL DEATH.**—Dr. A. L. P. Green, of Nashville, Tenn., communicates to the *Medical Journal*, published in that city, a singular case of progressive death by old age, of which the following are the main particulars: The subject was an old negro in the family of the narrator, who had attained the age of one hundred and eleven years. She was never sick in her life except at the birth of her children. Until within three years of her death she apparently experienced no physiological change, for thirty years. Her sight and hearing then began slightly to fail. Next she began to lose the sense of locality, not being able to find her way to the neighbors', though she could still see tolerably well, and her memory on general subjects was good. Next she gradually lost the art of walking, though her strength was still sufficient for locomotive purposes. The children would lead her round the yard, and she would seem delighted with the idea of walking, but as soon as she would stop she would forget it all, and would have to be taught over again. Finally she became unwilling to rise from her bed, where she lay without pain or other derangement of the functions of the system, until she gradually grew cold and exhaled her life away as a lamp becomes extinguished when its oil is exhausted. This is the only death we have ever heard of that was unconnected with disease or violence, and illustrates the perfectly natural passage of the soul from the body.

**MUSICAL MANIFESTATIONS IN BOSTON.**—Dr. K. Minor tells the *New Era* about an accompaniment to singing being played by Spirits on a guitar under a table, at a recent circle which he attended in Boston. At the first sitting when this occurred, some skeptics present declared that they saw the medium throw the guitar with her feet. Though this was not believed by the medium's friends, they concluded to test the matter on a subsequent evening, in a way which would relieve her from all suspicion, and accordingly tied her feet to her chair so that she could not touch the instrument if she would. The music on the guitar occurred with as great accuracy as before; and what was more remarkable was, that two gentlemen, sitting back from the table, saw a regularly formed hand, not belonging to any member of the circle, touching the strings of the instrument and bringing forth the sounds. At a subsequent sitting of the circle this hand was again seen as before—a guard against deception being provided which was satisfactory to all present, even the skeptics. The Spirit-musician purported to be Jesse Hutchinson.

**BEAUTIFUL VISIONS OF A LITTLE BOY.**—A friend of ours, a teacher of a high school, recently related to us the following, which we penned down from his own lips: "A few weeks since," said he, "I had among my pupils the son of one of the most eminent public speakers of this country. He was a bright, active, healthy, sensitive lad of only eight years. While with me he had not with that greatest of earthly bereavements to a child's heart—the loss of his mother. When he again returned to me after attending her funeral obsequies, he remarked that he thought he had seen his mother—that she seemed at several times to be near and with him. I paid but little attention to this at first, till a morning or two after, while he was lying in bed, wide awake, he exclaimed, 'There's my mother, and with her angels!' He was calm, but spoke as under a gentle influx, in a tone altogether different from his ordinary childish voice. In a few moments the vision passed, and he was restored to his ordinary condition. This happened, with variations, nearly every day for the remainder of the time (several weeks) that he was with me. Sometimes he exclaimed, 'I see the moon and all the stars,' as though the ceiling of the room and the external walls were dissipated, and he looked out upon the heavens. More than once he said, 'I see the Lord; he looks as if he were made of the fires.' Once he said, 'Mother has again appeared to me; she was standing on a star.' Once he heard her voice calling him by name, and saying, 'You shall come here; you shall come here.' The influence upon his mind and heart was most beautiful and beneficial. He was gentle, more loving, docile, and obedient. Nor did these experiences happen only when he was alone. He remained one day at church during the celebration of the Lord's Supper, when, if we may trust his childish account, his interior was again opened, and he seemed to behold the Lord and the angels, and the heavenly worlds. This vision continued some time, though he could not imperfectly describe it.

"I suppose I must in justice add a vision of quite a different character, which he also saw in another orthodox church. 'I saw,' he says, 'in the pulpit, a great idol, such as they have in heathen countries—like those in the geography, and a man came up behind him—he looked like a monkey—I thought he was a monkey—to lift up his hands as the minister does when he prays; and the people all knelt down, but I wouldn't—I wasn't a going to for him.'"

"I have since, through one of the most eminent and reliable mediums with whom I am acquainted, held repeated, and to me unmistakable interviews with the mother, who assures me that the visions detailed by her son were real—that she was there with us, even as she appeared."

## Original Communications.

## A LAMENT.

I pine for the world where there is no death,  
For the Angel World I pine;  
I sigh with a troubled and weary breath  
For the joys of a Life Divine;  
Thou art gone away to the Angel World,  
And for thee, sweet Love, I pine.

I heard in the night a wild bird sing,  
A bird with a mystic tone,  
The air was moved by its shining wing,  
And it sang in the midnight lone;  
'Twas a Spirit Bird from the Angel World,  
And thither my heart has flown.

I mourn by day with a vain regret,  
And I weep in the weary night,  
And I sometimes wish that I could forget  
The vision that haunts my sight—  
The vision that comes to my dream alone,  
But fades with the outward light.

I pine for the river whose waters flow  
Where the deathless roses bloom;  
But I sit by 'neath the cypress wo,  
And I fade like the waning moon,  
Low sinking toward Life's western verge,  
Low sinking toward the tomb.

I am weary now, and the wild winds blow,  
And the mournful pine boughs wave  
Where the robe of thy beauty lies veiled in snow;  
O would that I shared thy grave!  
'Twere better far, for my heart's a waste  
Where the winds of sorrow rave.

February, 1855.

## I. D. WILLIAMSON, D.D., ON MANIFESTATIONS.

In a recent number of the *Gospel Herald*, edited by the above-named gentleman, is an editorial on the subject of spiritual manifestations. So bold an ignoring of the whole subject, which he calls argument, can of course have no weight on the minds of those who have investigated the subject; but as his remarks are being copied into other papers of the same denomination, who are warning the public to let the thing entirely alone (though the Doctor himself says the subject is certainly worthy of examination), a brief review may not be unprofitable. The writer, on the start, informs us that he has heard much on the subject for years past, but seen nothing until recently. But now, *Lo and behold, he has examined it!* Yes, for he says he has "seen the elephant!" He might, perhaps, have added in the language of the old lady personated in Winchell's drolleries, when she saw the "critter" for the first time, "La me! yer, he is elephant! everybody knows he is elephant, and I wonder if he knows he is elephant." But to be serious: a feeling of sadness came over me when I read from such a source such a comparison when speaking of a religious faith which has spread so widely, and is so fast gaining ground over the whole earth—that is carrying comfort and consolation to the hearts of so many thousands by demonstrating to them the fact of a future life—and that is earnestly being defended by a host of as pure-hearted, sincere, and devoted Christians and philanthropists as the present generation can boast. He has "seen the elephant," which of course means that the whole field of spiritual manifestation is spread out before him. All that has transpired in the world since the first Rochester manifestation to the present time, is brought into one embodiment and named! In vain are all the involuntary writings claiming to be dictated by Spirits—the books of A. J. Davis, Judge Edmonds, Pains' "Philosophy of Creation," "The Healing of the Nations," Olin's sublime and instructive discourses—all the communications from day to day containing precepts and doctrines unsurpassed by the Bible itself—the presentation of Spirit-Hands—the audible voice of Spirits speaking in the English language—the heavenly songs that have been heard—the Spirits that have been distinctly seen by thousands—and all the facts that men have been so stupid as to receive on the evidence of their senses—all are disposed of. Yes, and as men's senses were no more reliable eighteen hundred years ago than now, we will put into the catalogue all the Spirit-communications of the Bible, for the Doctor says: "There is a proneness on the part of many to refer all unaccountable things to the agency of Spirits, and that, too, without any plain or palpable reasons." Now let him show me a law that will explain all the phenomena of the present without aid from the Spirit-world, and I will engage to apply that law with equal success to the manifestations of the Bible. But the reader is doubtless anxious by this time to take a view of the above-named elephant. Well, here it is! The Rev. I. D. Williamson has seen a man who professes that a Spirit-friend of his is visiting him daily and treating him with a course of *pneumatism*, for disease with which he has been suffering. He has sudden and spasmodic movements of the arms, much like that produced by an electric machine. "He waving his arms in all directions and threw himself into all sorts of attitudes and contortions for the space of half three-quarters of an hour, and felt no symptoms of fatigue!" The exercise, he says, is fast restoring him to health." The Doctor then proceeds to treat of this case as though it was all the kind of manifestations in the world. But as he hints he is going to investigate further, should it turn out that he has after all seen only a small portion of the animal's trunk as it aimed a slight blow at his conservatism, we will wait for another ray of light from that quarter to dispel the darkness from our poor, benighted souls. Now hear how he disposes of this only case of Spirit-manifestations he has ever witnessed. He says, "Whatever it may be, it seems to be identical with the demonology of old. A demon, in those days, was the Spirit of a deceased person, good or bad, as the case might be. A demoniac was a man into whose body a demon or departed spirit had entered." In those days our friend would have been said to be possessed of a devil (demon). "They were troublesome customers, and those who possessed them were considered peculiarly unfortunate. Men did not then deem it a great privilege to be possessed of a departed spirit (demon). The miracle was not to induce a departed spirit to enter the body, but it was to get him out of it."

Now I would ask the writer what is meant by the two simple sentences, "Try the Spirits whether they are of God," and "By their fruits ye shall know them?" He acknowledges that the Spirits of old might be either good or bad, but will he tell us where the Saviour ever cast out a good spirit, or where an individual was ever considered unfortunate to be possessed of a good spirit? According to his own showing, the influence that controlled this man was a good one, unless he makes it appear that being "fast restored to health" is a misfortune. Would it not be better for him to learn to discern between the Spirits than to denounce all manifestations promiscuously? The Pharisees certainly did not consider all Spirit-influence bad. They believed that good angels and spirits could speak to men. The Apostles also declare the same. And I will quote for the special benefit of my friend (who says the Spirit was very evil, and addressed him in very complimentary terms), the language of the clerk of a congregation before whom Paul was arraigned, who on finding him to be of the lineage of the Pharisees said: "I find no evil in this man, but if angel or Spirit hath spoken unto him, let us not fight against God." There were in old times spiritual manifestations, spiritual gifts, but the people were not then warned against looking into those things, because some bad or false Spirits sometimes manifested themselves. But the injunction was, "Covet earnestly the best gifts;" "Try the Spirits."

In conclusion. This is not the first time my esteemed friend, who "has seen nothing of the manifestations," has explained the whole mystery. He told us a few years ago that David's Divine Revelations was but a transcript of the minds of Fishbough, Lyon, Bush, and others, who were in mesmeric rapport with Davis at the time the revelation was uttered. He even classifies and tells us which of the minds controlled the medium in the different portions of the book. But where now is the Doctor's theory? Why did he not tell us that in the first manifestation he witnessed, his own mind had a powerful mesmeric influence upon the subject, causing him to beat and pommel his breast unmercifully for three

quarters of an hour, while he, the investigator, had fears all the while that the medium would have an epileptic fit. And then all those civil and high compliments paid him by the Spirits talking through the medium! Why, Doctor, did you not know that that was a mesmeric influence from your own mind, and that you were only praising yourself all this time! On the whole, I am inclined to think our good brother is on the road of progression, and from the effect produced on his former theory by so small a demonstration, the evidence that has not yet failed in convincing every mind that has thoroughly investigated it, may upset even his last theory, and convince him that Spirits, and good Spirits, do communicate for the good of man.

WATERTOWN, N. Y., Jan., 1855.

## U. CLARK'S TESTS OF THE SEER-GIFT.

Since the publication of my article on the development of the Seer-Faculty, I have received numerous letters from every section of the country, making inquiries, asking aids, examinations, tests, and suggesting that I should publish something sufficient to enable others, if possible, to develop the same faculty. I have endeavored to answer all those confidential requests were accompanied by evidences of genuine merit and the material means requisite to make me able to afford the time and severe labor indispensable in giving a thorough test. I find it impossible to adopt any general, rigid rules which will prove alike adapted to a multiplicity of different individuals. Each person demands a special delineation and special direction.

Among those who have written to me, I recognize several anxious inquirers of highly cultivated moral and intellectual natures, revealing the fact that this seer-phase of the spiritual philosophy begins to agitate the wide and deep interest it demands, for it is certainly the most practical and momentous field opened in this newly dawning dispensation of celestial unfolding. Let us see and know each other, as we are seen and known by the Great Father-Spirit, without regard to time, place, condition, or intervening space, and we are able to reach each other's wants, and feel the thrilling pulsations of sympathy vibrating through the great soul of a common brotherhood, bound from pole to pole by the spirit-electric telegraphic cord, along which with lightning speed courses the invisible currents of thought and emotion, as God and Angels pour down from the spheres influxes of superlunary wisdom, love, and truth into the souls unfolded to receive them.

Among the many tests of the Seer-power recently developed, I record one of irrepressible significance to skeptics. I withhold name and date out of regard to the modesty and delicacy of the highly-cultivated individual to whom reference is made.

About the middle of January, one morning as I was walking in my library, while in a state perfectly natural, I was suddenly drawn into communication with a person residing nearly two hundred miles from this city; one whom I had never seen but once, and with whom my interview had been quite brief. I immediately took seat at my secretary, and wrote to the individual, delineating in detail certain peculiar emotions and struggles experienced by the person at that moment and during the past twenty-four hours.

The following is an extract from the letter I shortly after received in reply:

"Had you been literally enshrined in the secret depths of my soul, you could not have delineated with a more faithful hand the thoughts and emotions swelling and throbbing within me during the time mentioned in your letter. I do not understand how this is, that you are able to go down amid the mysteries of my inner-life, and tell me what you find there, with all this intervening space between us; but that you have done so can not be gainsaid. \* \* \* But it is useless for me to repeat what you already know so well, for you describe my feelings and emotions better than I can. Your words come with a soothing and cheering influence."

Demonstrations of Spirit-sight analogous to this are becoming almost daily occurrences in my experience; and as I feel the solemn responsibility they enjoin, I lift my laboring soul to Heaven, and pray God and his ministering Angels that my humble mission may yet drop some blessings on the generation.

193 SOUTH FIRST ST., WILLIAMSBURG, L. I., N. Y.

## GOD SUPREME—LAW OBEDIENT.

C. HAMMOND, MEDIUM.

The cold, bleak wind howls around the palace and the cottage, and the plains and the forests are alike chilled with the death of a winter's atmosphere. Beast, bird, and insect hide their heads at the unwelcome snow, and streams are crusted over with ice. All nature wears an aspect of desolation. Life does not revive the flower, the plant, or the shrub, nor beauty deck the landscape or the garden.

The insect is quiet in his cell, the beast moves slowly in his task, and the birds carol their songs in a more congenial clime. Man is active to support his wasting form, or provide for the necessities of those needing his care. While so much of discomfort appears in the natural world, the horrors of war and famine are experienced by myriads who inhabit it. Is God less bountiful, his laws less merciful, or his government less perfect now than ever? Who control the seasons, who administer the laws, that bloom and beauty and luxury should appear in summer and disappear in winter? Why those alternate visits of cold and heat, of winter and summer, of growth and decay? Is law thus vacillating? Does law control God, or God control law? If law controls God, then God is not free, neither is he independent, but a subject of law. If he is a subject of law, he must be responsible to law. If he is responsible to law, who is the judge? The law can not be executed without an executor. The law being supreme, disallows a superior, and without a superior can not be enforced. Who, then, administers the law? According to this hypothesis, God can not, for he is a subject. He is not supreme over law, but law is supreme over him.

We assume that God is supreme, that he is superior to all law, that he is not a subject, but an executor of all the laws in the natural world. We assume that this must be so, or these laws would not exist as the exponents of his will and wisdom. We acknowledge no God that is controlled, but only him who controls all things, the laws of the universe not excepted.

Does God, then, control the seasons? Does he cause, by the eternal uniformity of his will, changes in the natural world, whereby alternate seasons appear? Either he does, or does not. If he does not cause these changes, who does? Law possesses no power to change any thing. It has no capacity to act or to think. It is irresponsible, and eternal. Its power is nothing. Law is simply a rule of action.

Hence the difference in the seasons can not be caused by law, independent of an actor; for there never could have been any law unless there had been a legislator—an intelligent Being to make it. As all law is simply a rule expressing uniformity of action, so such rules must recognize the action of some power. Things do not exist because there are laws, but laws exist because there are things. Therefore things date antecedent to laws. If only one of these things existed in the universe, law would not be necessary, nor would it exist, since nothing does exist but what is necessary. Law is the relation—the affinity—which one thing bears to another. That relation is eternal; consequently it is a uniform rule—and that rule is the law of action between the things mutually acted upon by each other.

Do the seasons, then, appear by the action established in virtue of the relations of things? Who established that relation? Who controlled so as to give reciprocal affinities between the parties? If law gave birth to order and harmony, who gave birth to law?

We affirm that intelligence, wisdom, must have preceded this arrangement, this order, this manifestation of harmony. The seasons appear in regular order—uniformity being always observable. Such order, regularity, and precision constitute a rule, but the rule, the order, the uniformity, the law, would be null and void without an executor; in fact, they could not and would not have had a name—a being—unless intelligence had so arranged the economy of nature as to bring them into existence.

Does God, then, change, and manifest that change by a change of the seasons? As man is related to earth, and his position in such relation is permanent, so man is changed, not as regards his relative position to the earth, but as regards his relation to other planets. This change is wrought by the change of the position of the earth in regard to the sun. Hence the position of man is changed by the action of the earth, and as both man and earth have changed positions in regard to another thing, so the seasons vary. Does God change because the earth and the things thereon change by the infinite wisdom and power of his will? Surely, he need not change to change the relative position of things, nor is it philosophical to allow that such changes are adverse to the general welfare of all.

The changes of earth in its relations to other planets demonstrate unchangeability in God, because such changes are uniform and regular. From these suggestions, it may be seen that the changes to which man is subject only prove the existence of a Power which governs and controls all things. A thousand changes, in the things subject to the will of the Infinite, fail of proving any change in the purpose of his mind. They simply convey to man a knowledge of the wondrous workings of the incomprehensible Deity.

What though the forms of men perish, God dissolves to rebuild. What though atoms change their relations to each other, it is the power of God that reunites them together again, or changes them to other positions where equally congenial affinities associate in ever-varying harmony and order. Thus, while the Infinite changes not, all nature is full of change; and man is ever changing from one position to another, from one idea to the next; and thus his knowledge is increased and his bliss enhanced by unfolding of wisdom.

## SPIRITUALITY OF THE RAPPINGS.

MR. EDITOR:

Some times meet with men who have heard Spirit-rappings and received communications, and still entertained doubts as to the fact of Spirits communicating. To such I wish to say a few words through the columns of your paper. Not long ago, my daughter was a medium for the sounds, and I had an excellent opportunity of investigating the phenomena by this mode of communication. We often received communications when she and I were alone together, and we rarely ever had any present except my own family. The subject was one of deep interest to me, and I investigated it with corresponding care and attention.

For several months we had rappings, generally every day—sometimes several times in a day. In the commencement of my examination I proceeded as follows: The first thing noticed was the sound—the rapping. We knew we heard this as certainly as we knew any thing. I knew also that I did not make it, and my daughter knew that she did not. We had no more evidence that either of us made it, than there that we are in China, and not in America. We knew, too, that some agent made it, for every thing that has a beginning has a cause. Hence we knew that some agent made the sound, just as well as if that agent had been a man in the flesh, and we saw him with hammer in hand making the sound. No philosopher will deny this position. Again, we knew that this agent was intelligent, or not intelligent. How were we to determine? Let me ask how do we determine in regard to other agents? We judge by the facts that present themselves; do we not? Thus a watch runs and keeps time, but we have no reason to suppose that it is intelligent. An animal is more or less intelligent. A pig, for instance, that can count and tell the time of day by a watch, is more intelligent than a cow that has never been known to do any thing of this sort. A man is considered intelligent, because he acts in an intelligent manner. He can reason, he can demonstrate a mathematical proposition, he can write a poem or an essay, he converses intelligently upon many subjects, therefore we say he is an intelligent agent or being. Why not judge this agent that raps on my table in the same way? I start out by saying to it, if you are an intelligent agent, I want it understood that when you rap once, you mean "No," when I ask you a question; and that when you rap more than once you mean "Yes." Will you agree to this? "Rap, rap, rap." Will you tell me your name? "Rap, rap, rap." Then when I repeat the alphabet, will it understand that when I come to a letter which you wish to write, you will rap—will you do this? "Rap, rap, rap." I then call over the alphabet, and obtain letters that spell out the name of some departed friend or relative. I then ask, Do you wish to make a communication to me? "Rap, rap, rap." Then please spell it out, word for word, as you did your name, will you? "Rap, rap, rap." By this process, then, I obtain the following communication: "If you would serve God, if you would be truly good, govern your passions, forget self, and let the aim of your existence be to glorify your fellow-man; for in the practice of this virtue man finds the greatest felicity which earth can bestow."

With these facts, what conclusion ought I to come to? Here is the sound, the agent, and the communication by that agent. The communication is intelligent. What objection is there to my affirming that the agent is an intelligent one, and, being unseen, that it is a Spirit? Is it possible to come to any other conclusion? If so, please tell me how.

NEW CASTLE, PA.

## DEFINING A POSITION.

MESSRS. PARTRIDGE AND BRITTAN:

In the report of the Conference, Dec. 26th, held at the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH office, Dr. Hallock states: "That 'Dr. Young (meaning me), who had previously asserted the incompetency of proof to establish spirituality in any case, defended the dog ghost with great vigor, contending it was simply egotism which denied to the animal kingdom the immortality we claimed for ourselves.'"

This statement of the case, if not wholly, is mostly erroneous. I did state, however, or intended to do so, that the spiritual presence of the dog, as set forth on that occasion by Prof. —, was as true as any other of the wonderful relations then and there given by him and others, and that *per se* there was as good testimony to prove the existence of Spirits—as of Spirit-men, and that if the evidences could be relied upon which assert the thousand instances in which the Spirit-forms of human beings have been visible, they were no more reliable as proof of the existence of human Spirits out of the form, than the presence of the dog Spirit was proof that the Spirits of dogs exist outside of their material forms; and I reasoned thence to the general conclusion that that was egotism in us which would only predicate an immortal spiritual existence for mankind in face of the fact that the existence of a dog Spirit was as fully proven by the manifestations as the existence of any other kind of Spirit; and I further asserted that I could conceive no improbability in the doctrine that all living forms have immortal spirits, if man is to be thus blessed, since variety in the spiritual world would be as desirable as in this, and that I could conceive it no particular happiness to be cast upon the shores of eternity with nothing to gaze upon and enjoy but the presence of Spirits possessing a general sameness of character and condition, since the very enjoyments of all life, and the very sources of all progress—all mental, moral, and spiritual growth—spring from the variety of forms, substances, and existences we come in contact with, study, and cultivate attachments for.

Again, Dr. Hallock makes me to have "previously asserted the incompetency of proof to establish spirituality in any case," notwithstanding I defended "the dog ghost." Here, too, is an error, for on that very occasion I claimed that there were many instances related within the experience of the investigators of our own day, that went to show that there were powers at work invisible but by their effects, and too palpable to be denied, and hitherto unexplainable but upon the hypothesis of spiritual existences. But that, though this were the case, the evidence was not conclusive that those effects were produced by the Spirits of human beings, while I was inclined to believe and hope they were, for I could see no good reason why these invisible powers should falsely assert they were the Spirits of departed friends when they were not, and would willingly surrender my life a sacrifice, if necessary, could I feel and have a sure and undeniable testimony from the region beyond the grave, that perpetual spiritual existence was in store for mankind.

In conclusion, it is true there are thousands of these manifestations that can be accounted for upon an assumption of the existence of psychological and mesmeric powers in man—none of which are evidences of Spirituality taken by themselves, and no sound investigator will admit them only as probable evidence; and there are thousands of other manifestations which go to show (unless new laws of mind and matter shall be discovered), that powers and intelligences invisible to the eye, are dealing and doing with us, all which should impel us to deep, free, candid, and fearless research; but there is neither necessity nor propriety for any attempt to preach or proselytize: If God sends these things he has a purpose in view, and can not fail to perform it—if powers not Godly nor omnipotent, we have nothing to apprehend from them, and should continue to investigate. Since my hand is in, let me clear up my position, for I hold that nothing can be an evidence of the existence of Spirits but what is shown upon or through material forms and substances, and, therefore, that all evidence that is reliable must be physical, or come through physical media. God himself is only manifested by his power upon mind and matter, and we have no perception of mind but as connected with matter; and we know too little of what either mind or matter is—brain or thought is to say of a speaking medium he is inspired, unless we can determine infallibly that under no state or

condition of the medium's mind, other than a supersensory one, he could have uttered the thoughts he or we assert to have been a manifestation of Spirituality. In our desire to have things as we wish them, we are too prone to admit as true that which we can not demonstrate to be what we assert it to be, and often lead, and are led, astray thereby. I would judge no one not determine any thing, for I am but a neophyte; yet for truth's sake let us only admit that as an evidence of Spirituality which can only be accounted for upon that hypothesis. A rapping that conveys intelligence not within the mind of any one present, but subsequently proved, must be taken as evidence of an independent volition somewhere else, and if not in the mind of any earth-spirit in rapport with the medium, that becomes evidence of a supra-mortal origin. So of the lifting of tables and other motions of material substances, independent of any known mortal means or capacity; in these we have supra-natural forces, apparently as independent of mortal agency as are the motions of the planets or the growth of vegetation, and hence are driven to the conclusion that not man, but a power we term Spirit, is moving them; and when documents are written by visible pencils, but invisible forces or drawings executed, or musical instruments played upon by unseen agencies, in all these cases we have as clear an evidence of Spirits or Spirit-forces as we have of God in the visible things he has made, and must believe them supra-mortal at least, if not spiritual until disproved, and especially so if they claim a spiritual origin and announce a former connection with earth and themselves, and with us, as relatives or friends.

W. J. YOUNG.

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF DEITY.

MR. EDITOR:

I beg leave to submit to the consideration of some of the metaphysical contributors to the SPIRITUAL TELEGRAPH, the following reflections concerning the Attributes of Deity.

It is generally taken for granted among theologians, that God is a being who *thinks, designs, and creates*. All of which appear to me to be groundless assumptions.

All ideas are mental conceptions. In order to be conceptions, they must evidently be conceived. In order to be conceived, there must be a time to conceive; i. e., they must take place in time, and not in eternity. For to assert that an idea is eternal, is in effect to deny that it is an idea at all; for that which is eternal is not conceived.

If, then, God be a thinking Being, all his thoughts must take place in time. There must have been a time when the first mental conception was evolved. Consequently there must have been a time prior to that first mental conception, when God was not a thinking Being. If there was such a time, then it is fair to infer—on the ground of his immutability—that he never could have become a thinking Being.

Again, it is assumed as a first principle in theology, that God was originally the sole and independent Being. Now, in order to think, every metaphysician is aware that two conditions are necessary, viz.: There must be not only the thinking power, but something concerning which to exercise that power. Now, to suppose there was anything exterior to and independent of God, to occasion thought, is manifestly absurd; for that would deny the primary assumption.

Still again, we ask, what is thought? Every one who has any knowledge of mental philosophy is aware that it is a revolving through the mind of an associated train of ideas, one idea going, and another coming. It is a fact, too, admitted by all, that no two ideas can be under the cognizance of the thinking faculty at the same instant. In other words, they can not occupy the mind of a thinking being contemporaneously. If so, then it will follow that a thinking being can not be omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, or eternal.

He surely can not know all things, when for very necessity but one idea can be under his immediate cognizance at any one time. Nor can he be said to be present to an object while the idea of that object is absent from his mind. Nor can he be said to have power over it. He can not be eternal, if he be a thinking Being, for, as has already been shown, an eternal thought is a palpable contradiction. It is asserting that a thing is conceived, and that it is not conceived.

The same or similar objections may be urged against the idea of design as an attribute of the Divine Being. Design implies thought. Consequently, if the foregoing reasoning be valid, it will follow that God can not be a designing Being.

A design is something purposed. To say that a design is eternal is to deny that it is design. In order to be design, it must be designed; and for every design there must be a time. If so, then prior to all designs, there must have been a time when God had not designed. If there was a time prior to all designs, there was a time when God was not a designing Being; and inasmuch as he is immutable, we argue that he never could have become a designing Being. The same chain of reasoning applies to God as a creating Being.

If he created this universe, then there was a time when and prior to when he created it; and in the time prior to when he created it, there must have been some reason or other in the Divine Mind why it did not exist. If there was any such reason, then it never could have existed; for we can not suppose any *ne* reason, nor can we suppose a change in an immutable God.

Again, it is absurd to suppose that a Being who possesses the attribute of eternity can create. Eternity is not something-through which the Divine Being lives. Eternity is, because God is. It is expressive (if I may so speak) of the condition of his Being. He who grasps, even faintly, the idea of God's eternity, will conceive of him, not as seeing and experiencing things as causes and consequents in the order of succession, but as existing contemporaneously. To him there is no future, no past, but one eternal now. And as there is no future nor no past to Deity, so is there no future nor no past to us. You can not affirm that he is any more present to-day, and the facts and objects of to-day, than he was ages ago, or that he will be ages hence. The same can be affirmed of any particular time. All times, all seasons, all successions are contemporaneous with God, and exist to him as a unit. In the absolute there are no successions. Now we ask, if it is not absurd to assert that God creates that which to him has always existed? To deny that whatever has existed, does exist or will exist to man; has all been a present contemporaneous existence in the absolute, and ever will be, is to deny the eternity of God. To man, events succeed each other, but not to God. The reason is evident: man is a relative existence, God is absolute. To man, there is time and space; to God, neither. To man, things go and come; to God, all events are as one. Multiplicity is seen in unity.

From what has been said, it will appear that the common idea of a "First Cause" is groundless, the necessity for any such hypothesis being obviated.

F. H. DENNIS.

MEADVILLE, PA., Dec. 16.

## COMMUNICATION FROM A QUAKER SPIRIT.

FLORIDA, HENRY CO., O., Jan. 9, 1855.

MESSRS. PARTRIDGE AND BRITTAN:

Gentlemen—I herewith send you a communication purporting to be from the Spirit of John Parker, an eminent public Friend or preacher of the Orthodox order of the Society of Friends. He was an uncle to my wife, and died in the year 1820, in Chester Co., Pa., where he had always resided. I had no acquaintance with him while living, and only a few interviews (if I may so call them) with his Spirit through my wife. Never in any former conversation had there been any reference to theological matters by which my opinions could have been known to him; but during the day previous to the following communication, the subjects referred to had been freely discussed in presence of my wife, who is a firm believer in the authenticity of the Bible, the Divinity of Jesus Christ, etc. She has no faith in these communications being from the Spirit-world, but thinks they are produced by something like mesmerism acting on the brain. She becomes charged in a few minutes, writes with great facility and rapidly without looking upon the slate (upon which she prefers writing), but in a horizontal direction, not knowing what has been written unless she reads it afterward. During the time of writing there is no abstraction of mind from surrounding things but; she converses



